

Chicopee Register

COMMUNITY

Szot Park to host Easter Bunny drive-through

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

CHICOPEE – On March 27, from 10 a.m. until noon, the Chicopee Parks Department will coordinate a safe, contact-free Easter-themed initiative at Szot Park off of Front Street.

As vehicles drive through “Easter Bunny Lane,” the Easter Bunny will offer each pre-registered child a bag filled with Easter eggs, candy, crafts, toys and various other items.

“It’s obviously been a difficult year for a lot of people, and we’re trying to come up with programming that is positive and creates a little bit of buzz that could bring up the spirits of kids and even parents, seeing their kids smile,” said Recreation Supervisor Dan Woodill.

On the morning of March 9, 162 of the 200 available slots had already been reserved; nearly 100 slots were filled on the first day that registration was made available.

If slots are still available, parents and caregivers can register their children at www.chicopeerec.com.

“We’re going to also have a scavenger hunt in the car rides,” said Woodill. “We’re going to give each participant a sheet of what they’re supposed to find, whether it’s eggs or carrots or bunnies, as the parents drive through Easter Bunny Lane.”

In past years, the Parks Department hosted large-scale Easter egg hunts. Most recently, one was held on April 20, 2019 at Dupont Middle School on Front Street.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the department to craft a new plan – one that prioritizes the safety of all involved amid the pandemic.

“Everyone stays in their cars; no one gets out. Any staff there will have masks on. The

See **BUNNY** page 7



Inside the Parks Department headquarters at 687 Front St., city employees are working hard to reintroduce residents to fun activities such as an Easter-themed drive-through event, set to occur on March 27.



CITY HALL
Update in technology

See Page 2



COMMUNITY
Sheriff's Dept. addresses opioid epidemic

See Page 6

TOWN HALL

City still fighting COVID-19

Mayor John Vieau urges residents to check official city pages for accurate data

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

CHICOPEE –Chicopee’s rising COVID-19 case count continues to so slow, but officials caution residents should remain on high alert.

On March 9, the city reported 186 active cases of COVID-19 – 47 less than on March 1. That same day, it was reported that 3,076 residents had survived their battles with COVID-19 while 25 lost their lives over the past 12 months.

The tide is turning, but Mayor John Vieau believes that is no reason to lapse on critical COVID-19-related protocols. So far, Vieau has been widely impressed by the city’s diligence and commitment to safety.

“Could we have saved more lives? Maybe, but I think Chicopee has done a tremendous job complying with orders



Mayor John Vieau

See **COVID** page 8

FIRE DEPARTMENT



The Chicopee Fire Department is a brotherhood, as was depicted on March 4 as firefighter Donald Grey worked his last shift.

Chicopee firefighter Donald Grey retires after 35 years

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

CHICOPEE – On March 4, it was only fitting that firefighter Donald Grey’s retirement ceremony was interrupted by his final call. After 35 years with the Chicopee Fire Department, Donald Grey closed out his career last Thursday.

“I thought it would be an exciting day; it’s actually been a bittersweet day. It’s my last day. I kind of hate to see it

come to an end,” said Grey, standing outside of Station 4 on Burnett Road.

Reflecting on his decades spent with the department, Grey praised the many safety improvements that have been made. What he’ll miss most about the job is the spirit of camaraderie that defines the profession, he said.

“Each station, you work with the guys for years and years on end,” Grey said. “You see their kids grow up, you

See **GREY** page 7



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
Recognizes challenges, triumphs

See Page 3



SPORTS
Colts enjoy short season

See Page 9

Transparency through technology; City Hall upgrades

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

CHICOPEE – Transparency has been a central focus of first-term Chicopee Mayor John Vieau’s operation since he inherited the office last January. Over the past year, the city has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on new technology, enabling municipal meetings to be more publicly accessible than ever before.

“I think it’s short money to make sure the technology is there for not only public meetings; we’re talking about production we can do for training and seminars and public speakers coming in remotely,” Vieau said on March 4.

As part of the \$14.2 million Phase I of the City Hall Rehabilitation Project, the City Hall Auditorium was equipped with a fully functioning television studio that is already being utilized by ChicopeeTV. The space has not yet reached full completion but has been used for multiple municipal meetings over the past 10 days.

For the past decade-plus, City Council met in the City Council Chambers on the fourth floor of the City Hall Annex building. Chief Information Officer Andrew Vernon detailed the obstacles that the space presented.

“Even before the pandemic, the amount of audio that’s mixed out of the City Council Chambers; very few people in Western Massachusetts are mixing that

much sound locally and remotely,” said Vernon.

During meetings held in the chambers, the city’s technological professionals were presented with a myriad of challenges, mixing sound that originated both from representatives on-hand and others who participated remotely.

When it came to opening the redone auditorium, Vieau placed a premium on being able to smoothly conduct hybrid meetings – meetings that involve both in-person and remote participation.

Learning from past issues pertaining to integrating Zoom calls into a live public forum, Vieau felt compelled to purchase additional technology that would smooth the process in the auditorium.

“I think it cost us a couple hundred thousand dollars more to add those certain modifications. It was \$280,000 for slightly different technology to accommodate that form and also full remote, partial hybrid or in-person and be able to switch between,” said Vieau.

Given that the auditorium only reopened to the public last week, it will take time for the city to master how to best use the space. Strides are already being taken, however.

Inside the auditorium, two large projector screens exist, which will allow audience members to view critical information during meetings. Multiple floor monitors were also installed, enabling



City Hall’s redone auditorium is fully equipped with a state-of-the-art television studio.



Elected officials attending meetings in-person in the City Hall Auditorium will benefit from multiple floor monitors that will allow them to view officials participating remotely.

representatives participating in person to view other elected officials who participate remotely.

Now that the state’s Open Meeting Law permits officials to participate in meetings remotely, Vieau prioritized putting the proper resources in place to transform the auditorium into the city’s central communication hub.

“Our goal is to have this really modern, cool way of conducting city business and also extracurricular [activities]. This auditorium is a multi-purpose space. I see nothing but great things in our future, using it for just about anything you can think of from art exhibits to social events,” said Vieau.

The city initially considered postponing the reopening of the auditorium by several weeks, but it was determined that all of the necessary resources currently exist to broadcast a high-quality meeting. Vieau credited the hard work of many municipal employees, all of whom contributed to fulfilling this vision for the building.

Despite added costs, at \$14.2 million, the price of Phase I of City Hall’s rehabilitation still fell below the \$16 million

that retired mayor Richard Kos had put out to bond for in 2019. The project is not expected to eclipse the \$16 million mark under Phase II.

A decade ago, more than a dozen city councilors and attorneys would routinely fill a cramped mayor’s office for mayoral briefings. Today, like the meetings of the Chicopee City Council, each briefing is televised and made available online.

For Vieau, technology is a worthwhile investment, especially when considering that the project remains under budget, he said.

“We’re comfortable with number, whether it cost a little bit more for technology. I think it’s the right thing to do because this is the present and future going forward,” Vieau said. “First and foremost, I take a lot of pride in transparency and think that the city of Chicopee is very transparent. It’s been that way for many years now. We are very open and upfront about everything we do, and I’m proud of that.”

Dalton Zbierski can be reached at dzbierski@turley.com.

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Census response now overdue

CHICOPEE – Approximately 20% of Chicopee households did not return state-mandated Annual City Census as of March 1.

Chicopee Board of Registrars of Voters is asking city residents who did not receive a Census questionnaire or who misplaced the form to

call the registrar office at (413) 594-1550 and census information can be taken over the phone or a new form will be mailed. Residents who have not moved within the last year may respond electronically using the census form available on the City’s website, www.chicopeema.gov.

B&G Club celebrates triumphs during annual meeting

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

CHICOPEE – On March 4, the Boys & Girls Club of Chicopee hosted its annual meeting virtually and reflected on the highs and lows of the past year. Club board members, volunteers, staffers and even members adjusted tremendously in the wake of COVID-19.

Roberto Nieves, Club Treasurer, provided a financial rundown, acknowledging that 2020 was considerably challenging.

However, the club successfully managed its expenses. While the budgeted income for FY 2020 was missed by \$7,000, budgeted expenses were beat by a whopping \$164,000.

“This gave us a comfortable profit for the year but also ensured that we had adequate cash flow beginning in 2021,” said Nieves.

In the coming months, the club could receive its second loan from the Small Business Administration’s Paycheck Protection Program, said Nieves, adding that the FY2021 budget is conservative.

Nieves expects a “slow and steady increase of revenue” as the year progresses and the club takes further strides towards normalcy.

Endowed investments have also performed well. In 2020, gains were observed of approximately \$260,000. Its current value sits just below \$2.1 million.

Executive Director Jason Reed offered three prestigious awards to community members and entities last Thursday. The Dr. Edward Ryan Award was given to Lieutenant Holly Davis of the Chicopee Police Department.

Davis is a familiar face at the club. In her third year as a board member, Davis serves as the Program and Safety Committee Chair. Reed cited Davis as being fundamental to the Youth Cadet Academy and rehashed a



[L to R] Lt. Holly Davis has been presented with and the Dr. Edward Ryan Award by the Boys & Girls Club of Chicopee. To her right is officer Mark Hammond. Davis and Hammond lead the Youth Cadet Academy, a program at the club.

story from the past.

“I’ll forever remember reaching out to Holly very last minute with a request for a cruiser or two to come to the club for a career day,” said Reed. “Upon returning to the club that afternoon, I thought something was horribly wrong as the entire parking lot was full of flashing lights. Not only did we get a cruiser; every available vehicle in the department was here to ensure that each member had the opportunity to participate.”

As she offered a statement, Davis noted that she isn’t typically emotional, but the youths and teenagers who enter the club each day pull her heartstrings. Davis thanked her team at the department for supporting her commitment to forging strong bonds with the club’s members.

“The work that we do together on behalf of the youth of

Chicopee is the highlight of my career,” said Davis. “Helping the next generation become better is what a legacy is about.”

The Community Partnership Award was bestowed upon the Chicopee Office of Community Development, a two-member team that consists of Administrator Kathleen Lingenberg and Operations Manager Julia Dias.

Over a six-month span in 2020, Reed reached out to the office three separate times, requesting financial assistance to meet needs pertaining to COVID-19. Lingenberg and Dias arranged funding that offered the club meals, personal protective equipment and outfitting to safeguard the Meadow Street headquarters.

“Our responsibility is to administer federal Community Development Block Grant funds,” said Lingenberg. “We’re glad to support [the club] during this



[L to R] Administrator Kathleen Lingenberg and Operations Manager Julia Dias of the Chicopee Office of Community Development received the Community Partnership Award from Boys & Girls Club of Chicopee Executive Director Jason Reed on March 4.



PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY LYNN MORRISSETTE OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF CHICOPEE
Members of the Chicopee Food Services Department receive the Helping Hands Award from Boys & Girls Club of Chicopee Executive Director Jason Reed on March 4.

pandemic and hope to see you on the other side to support some of your capital needs improvements.”

The Chicopee Food Services Department was made the recipient of the Helping Hands Award, as the club recognized Chicopee food service employees for ensuring that club members remained fed during a period of heightened food insecurity.

Reed credited Food Ser-

vices Director Melanie Wilk for her willingness to adapt to the circumstances and thanked Farm-to-Food Coordinator Greta Shwachman for mentoring youths at the club’s Teen Center. An article detailing the contributions of the department was featured in the March 5 edition of the Chicopee Register.

Dalton Zbierski can be reached at dzbierski@turley.com.

St. Stanislaus School to host drive-through Irish dinner

CHICOPEE – St. Stanislaus School will be hosting a drive-through Irish dinner on Saturday, March 20 from 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Each meal costs \$10 per person and includes corned beef, cabbage, carrots, potatoes, Irish soda bread, and dessert. There will also be a variety of cookies for sale that can be purchased by the half dozen for \$3 or whole dozen for \$5.

To purchase a ticket and schedule a pick up time, please call the school office at (413) 592-5135. Tickets can be reserved ahead of time and paid for at pick up. Pick up is between 3:30 and 5:30 in the back parking lot of St. Stanislaus School at 534 Front St. in Chicopee. Masks are required while on school property. Proceeds will help benefit the school education fund.

Amvets Post 12 holds weekly dinner specials open to the public

CHICOPEE – Amvets Post 12, located at 754 Montgomery St. in Chicopee, is hosting weekly dinner specials which are open to the public from 4 to 6:30 p.m.

The menu is as follows:

March 18 - Corn Beef and Cabbage Dinner

March 25 - Ham Dinner


Contact 413-315-8581 for tickets or menu of the week. Weekly dinners will be continuing in April as well; menu TBD.

Greater Springfield Senior Services announces assistance with COVID vaccine registration

REGION – Greater Springfield Senior Services, Inc. (GSSSI) is now assisting older adults with registering for the COVID-19 vaccine through the online registration portals.

Interested parties can call GSSSI at (413) 781-8800 (Monday through Friday


from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) to be connected to a highly trained, bilingual team of dedicated Information and Referral Specialists. Staff are ready to assist with online sign-ups and are available to answer any questions.



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EDITORIAL

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

How will my wife's benefits affect my state pension?

By Russell Gloor
Guest columnist

Dear Rusty: I am 73 and receive a pension from my state's Police and Fire Pension Fund. I took a full pension, so my wife only gets a widow's pension when I die, and this is only a fraction of what my full pension. I also get a small Social Security benefit, about \$95 a month, and that amount is pro-rated because of the amount of my state pension. My wife is 71 and receives a Social Security benefit of about \$600 a month. When I die, can she get a portion of my Social Security benefit? And will it increase since she will not be getting my full state pension? Signed: Retired Public Servant

Dear Retired: The state you live in is one of 26 which have opted for many state employees to not participate in the Federal Social Security program. As a result, your Social Security benefit, earned from work outside of your state employment, is reduced by your state pension. The details of your state pension and what portion of that pension your wife will receive as your widow isn't what affects your, or your wife's Social Security benefit amount. Rather, the base amount of your current state pension is what affects your benefit, due to a rule known as the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP).

WEP is why your Social Security benefit is only \$95/month. WEP applies to your personal Social Security retirement benefit, earned from working outside of your state employment, and reduces your Social Security benefit due to your state pension, because neither you nor your state employer paid Social Security FICA taxes on your earnings. And since your personal Social Security retirement benefit is reduced by WEP, your wife's spousal benefit, not her widow's benefit, from you would also be reduced, although from the numbers you shared your wife isn't entitled to a spousal benefit.

Your wife's own Social Security retirement benefit from her own work record is not affected by WEP because WEP applies to your benefits only. And neither will your wife's Social Security survivor benefit as your widow be affected by your state pension, should you predecease her. If you die first, your wife will be eligible to collect, as her survivor benefit, 100% of the amount you were entitled to before your WEP reduction, if that amount is greater than the Social Security benefit she is entitled to on her own work record. And that would, again, be totally independent of whatever she receives from your state pension. In other words, your wife's Social Security benefit, her own Social Security benefit or her survivor benefit, will not be at all affected by your state pension.

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Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

GUEST COLUMN

Cabbage conundrums

I always feel a bit guilty on St. Patrick's Day. What kind of Irish girl am I if I don't particularly like corned beef and cabbage? Most of my life I found the meat too salty and the cabbage... well, too cabbagey. The past couple of years, though, in an effort to help my gut microbiome replenish itself after too many Lyme antibiotics, I began taking an interest in fermented foods. Sauerkraut has become one of my favorites.

Last year I met a woman at a Grange talk who had a basement full of sauerkraut she made herself. Intrigued and always up for a homesteading challenge, I decided then and there that I was going to grow enough cabbage to fill my basement, too. The only problem was that I never had much success with this vegetable. Sure, I've enjoyed a homegrown head or two, but a cabbage farmer I am not. Thugs, slugs, bugs and cracks, in that particular order, have always thwarted my best efforts. Read on to learn about my experiences as I went from growing a half dozen cabbage plants to over 30.

I sowed my cabbage seeds indoors off heat the second week of April last year. When the first true leaf appeared, I transplanted the seedlings into individual cells of six packs and watered with a liquid fertilizer diluted to half strength. Bright light but cool temperatures grew stocky plants, and by May 15 they were ready to be hardened off. They were installed into the garden a week before Memorial Day. Most of the plants went into one of my rock-edged raised beds. I thought I was so smart. First I installed three-foot hardware cloth to keep out the bunnies (thugs), then I laid soaker hoses to and fro, knowing how these beds can bake in the heat and dry out daily. Cabbages aren't what you would call heat-loving. If that wasn't enough, I then covered the whole thing with a floating row cover, anticipating that the cabbage looper, the cabbage worm and the imported cabbage worm (all bugs) would visit and demolish my seedlings in no time. All my bases were covered, literally, and things were going great. The leaves began to pucker and curl: the seedlings were on their way to making heads!

But alas, I began to notice holes in the leaves. The kind of holes where you can see a shiny trail. Slugs had found my cabbage patch. Sometimes there were even dark gray slugs still attached to the leaves. Big ones, little ones, yuck! I began hand picking furiously, every morning at sunrise and again just before dark. Things finally began to look up and then the aphids (yet more bugs) hit.

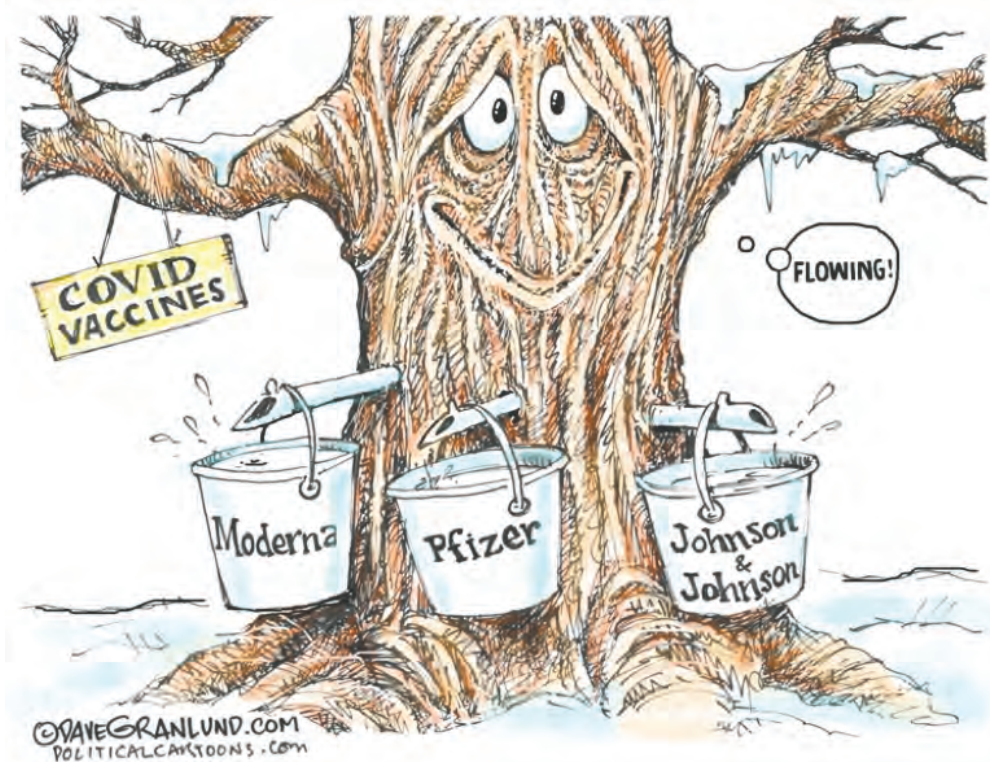
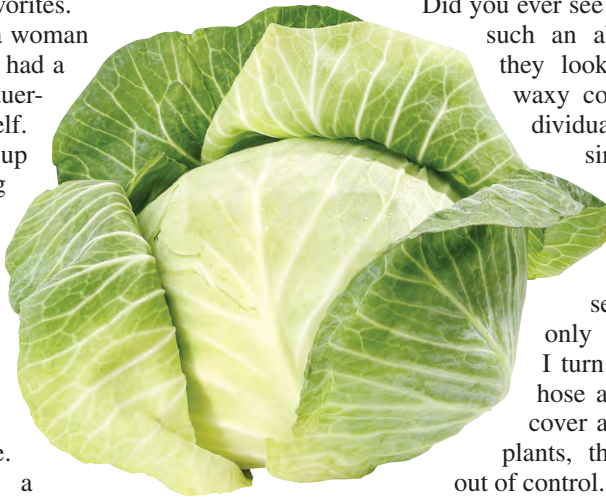
Did you ever see gray aphids in such an abundance that they look more like a waxy coating than individual bugs? Yes-siree, that was my cabbage patch. I think, because this set-up of mine only required that I turn on the soaker hose and not lift the cover and inspect my plants, things got way out of control. Had I seen the first few aphids I could have maybe blown them off with a spray of water, or waited until evening and sprayed with soap to smother the buggers. But once heads form and the aphids are within the overlapping leaves, you might as well call the party over and plant a cover crop instead. Live and learn.

Thankfully, this is not the end of the story. There were six cabbage transplants that I couldn't fit in the raised bed. I planted them at the end of my broccoli row in the main garden. Although plagued with a few slugs, and even a few bugs, I was able to harvest each head and made my first ever batch of sauerkraut, totally just about two gallons worth! As my bounty dwindles near winter's end, I am already strategizing this year's cabbage crop. I am going to try growing an early variety to try and beat the worst of the bugs.

Although still not a fan of corned beef, cabbage has surely has found its place in my palate and in my garden.

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



WE CARE ABOUT YOUR NEWS!

The *Chicopee Register* welcomes submissions of news in or related to Chicopee and its residents. Our "People News," is filled with submitted engagement announcements, wedding announcements, birth announcements, your new baby or news about your 25th or 50th anniversary celebrations. Please e-mail correspondence along with a photo to chicopeeregister@turley.com or send it to: Chicopee Register, c/o Turley Publications, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

Chicopee Register

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Chicopee woman receives vehicle donation through Good News Garage

Through a partnership with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Good News Garage awards vehicles to Massachusetts residents who cannot afford to purchase cars on their own. Car

For more information or to donate,
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Chicopee St. Patrick's Parade Committee launches March Money Madness fundraiser

Calendars can be purchased by calling

The Chicopee St. Patrick's Parade Committee strives to promote Irish pride and culture through its many events. For over 65 years, the committee has organized the annual Colleen Contest and Coronation Ball, constructed the Colleen's award-winning float for the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade, and awarded scholarships to young women who plan to further their education at a college or university.

Ocean State Job Lot will donate 42,000 winter coats to veterans

“We are so pleased with the results of

The coats are currently being distributed to veterans' organizations throughout the Northeast, in partnership with a multi-state network of more than 50 veteran support agencies, organizations, assistance programs and action groups serving New England, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

A vibrant floral armchair with a cream-colored base and large red and pink roses is the central focus. To its left, a clear glass vase holds a bouquet of colorful flowers, including red, purple, and yellow blooms. The background is a bright, out-of-focus interior space with large windows. The overall scene is bright and cheerful, evoking a spring atmosphere.

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Sheriff's Dept. addressing opioid epidemic during COVID pandemic

LUDLOW — Over the past year, COVID-19 has changed every facet of life and recent CDC data suggest it helped worsen the already overwhelming opioid epidemic.

While addiction-related issues have spiked during the pandemic, the Hampden County Sheriff's Medication Assisted Treatment program has helped more than 1,500 men and women battling substance use disorder, Sheriff Nick Cocchi said.

Through a partnership with CODAC Behavioral Healthcare, the largest non-profit, outpatient provider for opioid treatment in Rhode Island, the Hampden County MAT program pairs counseling and behavioral therapy along with access to all three FDA-approved addiction medications for treating substance use disorder: methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone.

"The MAT program helps people coming into our custody maintain these critical prescriptions without a fear of having to unnecessarily go through withdrawal," Cocchi said.

"At the same time, it helps current inmates and substance use disorder clients maintain abstinence from illicit drugs and ensures they return to the community with the best chances of avoiding an overdose and transitioning into long-term recovery. Offering this program and these medications is the humane and right thing to do if we truly want to help people battling addiction-related issues."

More than 80% of incarcerated individuals report battling with some level of substance use disorder, Cocchi said, and compared to the rest of the adult population, the opioid-related overdose death rate upon release from custody is 120 times higher. And recent CDC data suggest that the rate of overdose deaths during the year leading up to May 2020 was up 38.4% over the previous year, continuing a trend that started before the pandemic but worsened during it.

A recently released JAMA Psychiatry study analyzing emergency department visits showed a significantly higher weekly rate

of opioid overdose-related visits from mid-March to October 2020 compared to the same period a year before. Since the MAT program's inception on Sept. 1, 2019, it has provided a critical bridge to treatment for 1,586 men and women who came into the custody of the sheriff's office either as inmates or Section 35 treatment clients.

"We are proud to be working with the Hampden County Sheriff's Department on this important initiative that helps move the needle forward in treating all those struggling with addiction as patients, just like those facing diabetes or cancer, and offer them the most comprehensive, evidence-based therapeutic approaches available, such as MAT," Linda Hurley, president/CEO of CODAC, said.

"The progress we are making in Hampden County underscores that the program we pioneered in Rhode Island is both scalable and feasible elsewhere, and we are always available to help patients in other states."

CODAC's imbedded opioid treatment program at HCSD is based on its nationally praised MAT program with Rhode Island Department of Corrections, the results of which have been published in JAMA Psychiatry.

People coming into the HCSD's custody with an active MAT prescription are allowed to continue their treatment regimen with a typical approval coming the same day as intake, according to medical staff with the program. Anyone in custody who reports a form of substance use disorder where the three FDA-approved medications are deemed helpful is assessed for eligibility and started on MAT when appropriate.

In addition to medication, individual and group therapy is provided by CODAC and HCSD staff. For many clients, it is the first time they've experienced therapy for substance use disorder and serves as a gateway to recovery that carries over to life after release. Also, sentenced inmates not presently on medication, but with a previous history of substance use disorder, may

be eligible to start MAT prior to release. This can help them transition into long-term recovery and at a minimum, decrease the chances of a fatal overdose upon release.

When someone is released from custody, the Hampden County Sheriff's Office connects them with a health care provider in their community as part of its nationally recognized public health model. As an extension of that, anyone on MAT is directly connected with an authorized and licensed MAT clinic wherever they live.

During the pandemic, as the availability of community-based treatment options fluctuated, MAT was a critical lifeline for people leaving the department's custody. Following a lawsuit filed to compel mass releases from jails across Massachusetts in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the state Supreme Judicial Court on April 3, 2020, ordered the Massachusetts Trial Courts to review certain individuals for presumptive release from custody.

Spontaneous releases spurred by this decision made release-planning difficult, according to MAT staff. But they adapted by treating any court appearance like a potential release date, coordinating community services to ensure if someone was released by a judge, they could continue on medication by the following day to avoid a lapse in treatment.

The program was recently audited by the National Commission for Correctional Healthcare and has been fully accredited with exemplary remarks.

About CODAC Behavioral Healthcare

CODAC Behavioral Healthcare, a non-profit organization founded in 1971, is Rhode Island's oldest and largest provider of outpatient services for opioid use disorder, other substance use disorders, and concurrent behavioral health challenges. CODAC is now licensed in Massachusetts to operate an opioid treatment program. For more information about CODAC, visit codacinc.org.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Hampden County MAT program pairs counseling and behavioral therapy along with access to medication prescribed to help recovery from substance abuse.



Sheriff's Department employees work with incarcerated people who have substance abuse issues and are in recovery.



Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi said the Medication Assisted Treatment program helps incarcerated people "maintain abstinence from illicit drugs and ensures they return to the community with the best chances of avoiding an overdose and transitioning into long-term recovery."

Chicopee small businesses hopeful, worried about sports better proposals

CHICOPEE — "There is no in between; hundreds of business owners and thousands of their workers will either be helped or hurt by what the state chooses to do on this issue," said Billy Stetson, who owns both the Rumbleseat Bar and Grill and Collegian Court in Chicopee.

Stetson has been advocating for small local businesses like his to have sports betting for close to two years and his hope is getting closer to reality with a pair of identical bills filed by State Senator Adam Gomez (D-Springfield) and State Representative Orlando Ramos (D-Springfield) that would allow bars and restaurants and other approved retailers to offer sports wagers to their patrons. Of the more than a dozen bills filed this session, their legislation is the only that would allow Stetson to

be part of the action.

"Not only do the Gomez-Ramos bills help a small business owner like me but all the other bills actually hurt a small business owner like me," Stetson said.

Andy Yee, Principal Managing Partner of Bean Restaurant group that operates 10 restaurants in Mass. and Conn. supports the Gomez-Ramos legislation. "We have some restaurants and bars that this would be perfect for. It's not for every restaurant but some would greatly benefit from keeping our patrons in their seats a little longer to watch a Bruins game for example, that they just bet \$25 on. I mean why not?"

"As a sports bar, we can't afford to lose customers to a fancy sports book downtown during the big games or any game for that matter. And now with what CT

may do we could lose customers to their sports bars that may allow betting. We were hammered by COVID. This is a needed shot in the arm for me and all the folks we employ," said Chris Arilotta owner of Christopher's Tavern in the Sixteen Acres section of Springfield.

In addition to the obvious sports bars and restaurants that could be helped by this legislation there are many private clubs that would be appropriate places to allow sports betting kiosks. Places like VFW's, American Legions, Elks Lodges, Knights of Columbus and so on. Many have some form of lottery or bingo already and would be obvious places for their members to enjoy a game they wagered on and continue to support their club and the Commonwealth simultaneously.

Adam Anischick, who is the manager and director of the American Legion Post 452 in Chicopee agrees. "Why in the world shouldn't we be able to have a kiosk here if it becomes legal? Our members can grab a beer and some food and enjoy each other's company instead of maybe racing over to the casino to place a simple bet and be caught by their allure."

A press release from both Gomez and Ramos issued clarifies some of the details of the proposed legislation. Other measures unique to the Gomez-Ramos version is an opt-out clause for cities and towns, giving them the power to decide whether or not to allow wagers in their municipalities. This legislation would also prohibit wagering placed on sports involving animals.

HD.3606/SD.2237 lays out a clear way to distribute a portion of the revenue by allocating it directly back to cities and towns based on the amount wagered in those cities and towns. The remaining revenue raised from the bill will be allocated to the Massachusetts General Fund and directs revenue towards compulsive gambling mitigation funding, youth development support, economic development in Gateway Cities, a newly created Distressed Restaurants Fund and approved training for municipal police departments under the recently enacted police reform law.

State Senator John Velis (D-Westfield) was the first co-sponsor of the Senate version and assisted in the drafting of the legislation.



[L to R] David Grey poses with his younger brother, Donald Grey, on March 4. The two retired firefighters collected a total of 75 years serving Chicopee in their positions.



On his last shift, firefighter Donald Grey waves as he leaves Fire Station No. 4 to attend to his final call on the afternoon of March 4.

GREY from page 1

hear about how the kids are doing in school, you check in if they have medical problems and they do the same for you. You develop a concern for their wellbeing and appreciate their concern about yours.”

During a small ceremony, Fire Chief Dan Stamborski presented Grey with the 35 Years of Service Award. Stamborski took said he was proud of his longtime colleague.

“These are the enjoyable days, the good days,” said Stamborski. “We’re sad to see Don go. Most professions, you don’t work over three decades like that. It’s a brotherhood and it’s a career.”

David Grey, who retired from the department in 2013 after 40 years of service, was on-hand to congratulate his younger brother, Donald.

“The two greatest days was when he got on the job and now seeing him retire healthy,” said David. “We both retired unscathed. Be-

tween the two of us, that’s 75 years of service.”

David encouraged his brother to “relax and enjoy” retirement, adding that it will open up opportunities to spend more time with family and partake in miscellaneous hobbies. He also hopes that Donald will remain close with his fellow firefighters.

“It doesn’t end here,” said David. “I still stop at the fire stations, I still go to the fireman balls, we used to go to Bruins games, and I tagged along. Then, there were so many people coming off the job and, on the job I was known as ‘Don’s brother’ by the younger guys I never worked with.”

Stamborski praised Donald Grey for his time spent at a dispatcher. He believes that the retiring firefighter made a positive impression on the entire department.

“I think he leaves a good impression on young firefighters. He sets a good example as a professional, and

that’s good for them to see someone to look up to,” said Stamborski.

Donald was “blown away” by the March 4 ceremony, as he voiced appreciation for the pleasant surprise. He hopes that many future firefighters will follow in his footsteps by serving the residents of Chicopee.

“It’s an excellent job to shoot for,” said Donald Grey. “Firefighting’s gone medical now. If you’re really interested in helping people, it’s a great job to have. There’s still the excitement aspect of fires.”

As he watched Donald board the fire truck for his final call, David stood by, visibly proud. Both men were fortunate enough to have worked decades doing a job they love.

“I never went to work a day in my life. Maybe I didn’t want to wake up, maybe I wanted to sleep in, but I feel that way, and there’s not a lot of people who can say that. My brother feels the same way,” said David.

BUNNY from page 1

bunny is fully covered. It will just be a quick hand-off from the bunny to the car. There’s really not too much contact with us and the car,” said Woodill.

Mayor John Vieau said he’s excited to see how the activity unfolds on March 27. He commended the Parks Department for rethinking a classic Chicopee tradition.

“Right now, we’re doing an Easter egg drive-through. As much as we used to do this massive egg hunt at Park & Rec., it’s turning into this unique way that we can still get people interactive in a safe way,” said Vieau.

The March 27 drive-through will also include a coloring contest. Families who register for the drive-through can access contest materials on the department’s website.

“[Drawings] can be handed to the bunny that day or dropped off to us by April 1,” said Woodill.

For Parks Department employees, planning the event offers a welcome change of pace. While Chicopee’s parks have been open, activities have been limited over the past 12 months, and the upcoming drive-through will represent the department’s largest initiative since the onset of the pandemic.

“It’s been a little difficult for us too, so we’ve had to come up with out-of-the-box ideas, programs that are safe and keep us busy,” said Woodill, who is working alongside the city’s Health Department and School Department to offer Chicopee youths more outdoor activities this spring.

For the Parks Department, Chicopee children and teenagers are of the utmost importance. For that reason, the department is committed to making the March 27 drive-through a memorable success.

“I can only imagine how difficult it’s been for them not being able to hang out with friends as much. We’re look at this as [a way] to get the kids up and going and



On March 27, at Szot Park, 200 children will gain access to Easter Bunny Lane.

smiling a little bit,” said Woodill. “Even if it only takes 10 to 15 minutes to drive through it, it at least gives them something to look forward to instead of the everyday staring at a computer and not being around their friends.”

Dalton Zbierski can be reached at dzbierski@turley.com.

RiverMills Center transportation services

CHICOPEE – The Chicopee Council on Aging’s Transportation Department is doing emergency rides to supermarkets, pharmacies and doctor’s appointment during COVID-19, for Chicopee seniors 60 and older.

Transportation service is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m., for Chicopee’s older adults. For reservations, please call 413-536-5733.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chicopee COA follows all CDC Safety Standards and adheres to all mandates from the City and State of Massachusetts.

A \$10,000 grant from WestMass ElderCare has allowed the senior center to expand its transportation offerings.



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Women’s Fund of Western Mass., HCC partner on leadership program

HOLYOKE – The Women’s Fund of Western Massachusetts is sponsoring an eight-week spring training program at Holyoke Community College aimed at women who want to enhance their leadership skills.

The course – “Women Leaning Into Leadership: Empowering Your Voice” – is being offered over Zoom on Thursdays, from noon to 1:15 p.m., March 25 through May 13.

Beyond that, each program participant will receive 30 minutes of private, one-on-one coaching from the instructor, Annie Shibata Ph.D., owner of Growth Mindset Leadership and Communication Coaching.

The cost of the eight-week program is \$799, but the Women’s Fund of Western Massachusetts is offering sponsorships of up to \$650 to each qualified participant.

“One of priorities at the Women’s Fund is to help facilitate parity in positions of power and leadership,” said Monica Borgatti, chief operating officer of the Women’s Fund of Western Massachusetts. “We would like to see more women in leadership positions across the region, and we are proud to partner with HCC on a program designed to help women become more effective leaders.”

This course, along with HCC’s monthly Women’s Leadership Luncheon Series, is targeted to emerging leaders in mid-career and to women working to become more effective in their jobs and in the community.

During the program sessions, participants will learn to evaluate their communication skills and apply new communication techniques; practice the power of mindfulness; distinguish forms of influence and persuasion to create powerful messages; assess their leadership strengths; and create short- and long-term plans for career development.

“We’re really happy to announce this new collaboration with the Women’s Fund of Western Massachusetts as we work together to develop women leaders in our community,” said Michele Cabal, HCC executive director of Business, Corporate and Professional Development. “The partnership makes sense as we share a common mission of working to help others achieve their goals.”

Enrollment for the course is limited by design. To register and apply for a sponsorship, please go to: hcc.edu/women-leaning

Gentle exercise with Ryan

CHICOPEE- The Council on Aging offers “Gentle Exercise with Ryan” Via Zoom, Mondays and Fridays at 12 p.m.

This class focuses on functional movement & fun. This is an online class. Join Ryan every Monday and Friday at 12 p.m. The Zoom link is shared on RiverMills Center’s Facebook page. If you do not have Facebook, please contact RiverMills Center at (413) 534-3698 to provide your email address for the Zoom link to be emailed to you. Please save the Zoom link as that is the link you will use each class.

Tuesday yoga at RiverMills Center

CHICOPEE – The Chicopee Council on Aging will be offering Zoom Yoga on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m.

Caitlin Lavin, Certified Yoga Instructor, will be leading classes. These classes are free and the Zoom links are available on RiverMills Center’s Facebook page or by calling (413) 534-3698.

Zoom Tai Chi with Michelle

CHICOPEE – The Council on Aging offers “Tai Chi with Michelle” Via Zoom, Thursdays at 1:30 p.m.

Experience the many slow and gentle benefits of Tai Chi Fit/Qigong. The class is led by Michelle Zemba LMT, Certified in Tai Chi/Qigong. This is an on-line class. The Zoom link will be shared on RiverMills Center’s Facebook page. If you do not have Facebook, please call RiverMills Center at (413) 534-3698 to provide your email address for the Zoom link to be sent to you. Please save the link as this will be the link you will use for each class.

COVID from page 1

and advisories,” said Vieau on March 4. “I feel that we’re writing a manual for COVID-19 every day. We’re trending in the right direction.”

Reporting a death toll of 25, with a population of 55,421 residents, Chicopee compares favorably to neighboring communities such as South Hadley, which has recorded 41 deaths despite a population of 17,806.

Bobbi Mabb, municipal communication and special projects manager, listed several factors that could contribute to delays in tallying the city’s death count.

“When someone passes away, even though the hospital has to report it, it may not get reported timely. Sometimes, people will pass away at home, and it takes the family to report it. We don’t always get the full report until later,” Mabb said.

Appointment-free COVID-19 testing is still available at no cost to Chicopee residents. The Chicopee Municipal COVID-19 Test Site at the upper level of the RiverMills Senior Center at 5 West Main St. is open each Monday and Wednesday from 8 a.m. until noon.

“If you don’t feel well, we have a free test site for you. If you think you’ve been exposed, go get a free test, because that’s how you’re going to stop COVID-19. You’re going to get it out of the general population,” said Vieau, urging sick residents to remain home until they receive a negative test result.

With case counts lessening, Vieau said residents should “do what you’re supposed to do now more than ever because we are reaching

ing the end.”

He feels that the city can thrive in the “new normal” simply by practicing the protocols that have become familiar over the past 12 months.

For up-to-date COVID-19 information, visit the Mayor’s Facebook page at “City of Chicopee- Mayor’s Office.”

Vieau said residents can view statistics wherever they want on social media but encourages everyone to visit the city’s website and his Facebook page for accurate information.

“If you want real information, the Mayor’s Facebook page is a real location to get facts,” said Vieau. “If you want to listen to information on other parts of social media that you think is true, it could be, but I don’t know. I don’t have time to monitor forums on Facebook. I have too many other responsibilities.”

Vieau does have time to offer up-to-date COVID-19-related reports and said he’ll do so when new, pertinent material is available. Despite the complaints of several constituents, Vieau feels strongly that it is prudent to speak only when necessary to avoid watering down crucial information.

“I don’t want to give a message because someone wants to hear something. I want to get a message out because it has meaning to it,” said Vieau. “We use the reverse 9-1-1 system as a messaging mechanism. When we have updates, we use that.”

Three times each week, Vieau communicates with the fire department, the police department, the Health Department, the Council on Aging and other entities for 15 to 20 minutes “to make sure we’re all on the same page.”

Dalton Zbierski can be reached at dzbierski@turley.com.

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COMMUNITY



David Girouard fights to head for the goal.



Cam Robinson sends a pass away.



Nick Farrell prepares for a wrist shot.



Carson Langlois crosses into the offensive zone.

PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPOTOS.COM

Colts enjoy great short season

CHICOPEE – While some hockey teams struggled with a shortened schedule, the Chicopee Comprehensive High School ice hockey

team thrived, going 7-3 for the season. The Colts did struggle a bit late, with their three losses coming at the end of the season, but the Colts

scored sweeps of Amherst Regional and Ludlow during the abbreviated campaign.

MIAA

Football season ready to get underway

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – For the first time ever, it will be football season in March and April, and teams will be playing into the warm instead of playing into the cold.

Rivalries will be renewed and the many games local fans love to see will take place over the next two months over the course of a six-week modified schedule.

While football was not played on Thanksgiving, some of the weather teams will play in during the first few weeks will feel like Thanksgiving. And some of the classic thanksgiving matchups will take place, including Agawam versus West Springfield, Chicopee versus Chicopee Comprehensive, and East Longmeadow versus Longmeadow.

Another big matchup scheduled between smaller schools is a classic rivalry between Palmer and Ware. That game is usually the culmination of the Tri-County League schedule for both teams in the fall, but will be a great way for the two teams to renew acquaintances since no football was played last fall.

Minnechaug will have a full slate of games. Minnechaug has been a strong team in Division 3 the past few years, playing twice in the finals in recent years against powerful Central High School. They will also meet several other rivals, like Longmeadow and East Longmeadow.

Another team that is normally part of the powerful AA Conference is Holyoke High School. Holyoke will renew acquaintances with both Minnechaug and Agawam during the abbreviated football season.

The football season is especially significant for Holyoke because the Knights as a school, will be participating in an athletic conference for the first time since Oct. 21, when the fall season was cut short in the city because Holyoke entered its third straight week of being in the red, high-risk for COVID-19 spread category. At that point, Holyoke officials stopped playing off all sports, cancelling the remainder of the fall season. Holyoke remained in the red category due to the second surge for four months, and officials cancelled the winter season while other schools in the red chose to participate in the basketball, hockey, and swimming season.

Holyoke finally went into the yellow two weeks ago, and green-lighted the Fall 2 season, allowing football, girls volleyball, unified basketball, and cheerleading to take place. The Knights are currently scheduled to play in the second week of the season, on March 26 against Minnechaug. The Knights are not currently scheduled for a Week 1 game.

The rest of the schedules are on miaa.net for most teams. The football season is set to conclude at the end of April, so teams can move into the abbreviated spring season, which will go from early May to the very end of June. There will be no playoffs for the football season.

McDermott balancing variety of roles in 2021

SEEKONK – Whether it's been as a crew chief, spotter, driver, mechanic or in another role, Cam McDermott has built quite the resume in short-track racing. He started his career driving in quarter midjets, quickly moved to the Thompson Speedway Modified division, where he won the championship -- and from there, his career has blossomed in a variety of different directions.

For 2021, McDermott is going to be quite the busy guy once

again -- but his preparations for the season includes getting the No. 8 Maybury Material Handling machine ready for competition in the six Tri Track Open Modified Series events. McDermott will be behind the wheel of the family-owned machine to join a talent-filled group of competitors on the Tri Track circuit.

"We're mainly going to focus on the Tri Track stuff this year, transitioning into that after focusing on the Stafford Motor Speedway Open Modified races

the last few years," McDermott said. "The competition with Tri Track is always great. I want to go out there and compete against the best -- I love doing that. On the ownership side of Tri Track, with what Wayne (Darling) and Ed (Bennett) are doing, it's good for the racers and the teams."

Outside of driving, McDermott will be working as crew chief for Eddie Harvey Racing on the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour, with his close friend Woody Pitkat, driving. McDermott is ready to tackle that role

after more than a decade working with the legendary Pasteryak family, where he recently was the crew chief for Chris Pasteryak. Back when McDermott was winning races and a championship in the Thompson Modifieds, McDermott was connected with the Pasteryak family, started helping Carl on his car, and from there, became a major part of the operation. During the last decade, he says he completed just about every job there is on a

Modified race team, minus maybe being the jackman or gasman on a pit stop. He also has experience working with Woody Pitkat in Pitkat's championship run at Stafford Motor Speedway, and when Pitkat was competing for Buzz Chew Racing on the NA-SCAR Whelen Modified Tour as a spotter.

McDermott's driving experience also includes competing in the Lite Modified division at

See **RACING** page 10

NECBL to bring in video technology to league venues

NORTH ADAMS – The New England Collegiate Baseball League has agreed to a partnership with Synergy Sports to implement the company's innovative video technology into each of the league's ballparks, in addition to adding TrackMan technology to its venues. The two globally renowned products represent the league's grand vision to enhance the preparation and development for each player in every NECBL organization and to provide Major League Baseball (MLB) scouting departments with more access to player data than ever before.

As part of the agreement, each NECBL organization will install a six-camera Synergy Sports setup in their venues to record and log all game action, assisting coaches and student-athletes with game preparation and post-game review. The partnership also provides a teaching tool to allow coaches to work with student-athletes to develop their skills through detailed analysis of practices and games.

NECBL coaching staffs will benefit from the efficiency of the Synergy Sports system, with teams receiving fully tagged footage of games delivered directly into an online platform for detailed analysis. Players will be better equipped to scout and prepare for their opponents, while

also being able to analyze and breakdown their own highlights. All 30 MLB scouting departments across the league have already come to rely Synergy's elite scouting video services, and now will be able to view every pitch from every NECBL game directly into their draft rooms.

Synergy Sports has built its success on proprietary technology which links meaningful sports data and video clips to create visual statistics and analytics about players, teams and games. Patented "1-Click Video" links every stat to the supporting video, resulting in automatically generated edits that once took coaches hours to create. Infinite sorting and filtering of statistics and video clips in real time gives coaches endless opportunities to discover the answers to important questions as they formulate winning strategies.

TrackMan Baseball is used for player evaluation and development by all major league and minor league teams in the United States, some of the top NCAA programs and by a majority of teams in Japan and Korea. The industry-leading technology captures the most comprehensive and accurate ball tracking data during the game or at practice and is redefining the language of baseball.

Hampshire association seeking umpires

REGION – The Hampshire Franklin Baseball Umpire Association (HFBUA) is planning to conduct classes for the 2021 baseball season following all recommended COVID-19 protocols including the possibility of on-line instruction. The association covers umpiring of scholastic baseball for all of Hampshire and

Franklin county schools registered under MIAA and several other baseball leagues in the area. If you are interested in umpiring baseball or obtaining further information regarding the upcoming classes please contact Roger Booth - Secretary/Treasurer of the HFBUA via email at quilthunter@comcast.net.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Cam McDermott serves a lot of roles on his racing team.

RACING from page 9

Thompson, where he was the champion, and at Stafford Motor Speedway, where he competed in the SK Light Modifieds and their premier SK Modified division.

And that's just scratching the surface of his resume.

"It just grew from the Thompson Modified days and it got better and better," McDermott said of his relationship with the Pasteryak family. "They are just a great family to be around. Between the Pasteryak family and my dad, I've learned everything I know about racing from them. The Pasteryak's pay attention to every single detail. It's such a great atmosphere to be able to learn from them and now transition it into my own car. I've been able to take everything I've learned and just put it into what's best for me."

With experience with the Pasteryak family, and now some offseason time with Harvey preparing for the new season, McDermott feels 2021 might be his best ever behind the wheel. His driving resume speaks for itself, with multiple wins and championships, but he's lacking something he's trying hard to get: a win in a Tour-Type Modified. He hopes to end that drought with Tri Track this year.

"It was definitely a learning curve jumping from the SK Modified to the Tour-Type Modified, I think the Tour-Type Modified really suits my style a lot better than the SK does," McDermott said. "I'm not nearly as aggressive as everyone else to be dominant in the SK. Paying it out of your own pocket, it makes you definitely consider everything. As a family-owned team with my parents, in-laws, and a few close friends and good sponsors helping us out, and all the experience I have in a variety of different roles, it should be a good year."

As most others, his goal is to come home with the car in one piece, have a solid run, and continue to build a notebook in hopes of visiting Victory Lane with Tri Track. But he knows the level of talent the Tri Track field will offer in 2021 -- ranging from former series champions to Whelen Modified Tour champions, race winners, rising stars and more, will be tough to compete with. His immediate goal is going to be to qualify for the races, then worry about the rest once the green flag drops.

"I have a lot of experience coming from many different directions. I wouldn't say that I know everything -- no one does in racing," McDermott said. "There's always a learning curve for everyone with new stuff coming out, new technology... but driving-wise I feel like I'm almost there. A good year

for me would be to make all of the races, first. There is so much competition, and just qualifying is going to be difficult. If we can get into the races, then get some top-fives, I feel like that would be good. If you can get to the top-five, you can compete for wins."

Tri Track will visit three of New England's historic race tracks -- Monadnock Speedway, Seekonk Speedway and Star Speedway during the season -- and McDermott does have limited experience with all of them, driving previously in Tri Track races, where he does have top-10 finishes.

"I've run all three tracks before and I like Star a lot, we always seem to be really competitive there," McDermott said. "We ran Seekonk at the Haunted Hundred in 2019 and we were competitive until the last lap, when we went through the infield in the middle of chaos in front of us. I like both of those tracks a lot. I still haven't gotten my hands around Monadnock yet. The one time we went there we were fast, but broke a trailing-arm bracket, so we don't really know how that day would have ended. My dad grew up at Seekonk -- he ran Street Stocks there and I grew up in the grandstands there. I'm looking forward to running there again."

Without his parents, in-laws, a few close friends and sponsors like Maybury Material Handling, Douglas Battery, Richard Green Insurance and McDermott Motorsports Services, McDermott wouldn't be in the position he is now. The support from his wife -- Lauren -- who raced previously herself, has been a major player in his career. He's hoping to balance his past experience with his current roles and help himself grow as a driver en route to victory lane in 2021.

"We're going to enjoy it," McDermott said. "I was with the Pasteryak's for all of the years and still ran my own team at the same time, so I think we will be good. I think you learn a lot about the cars and that helps you understand everything a lot better when you're in a variety of roles like I have been in. I come from an engineering background and I think if you understand everything, the more you do the better you will be at everything."

"Just being able to get the opportunity to do what I do now is because of all of the people that have supported me in my career. Everyone is always pushing me to be better. All of my experiences have been great and I look to continue on with it this year."

Registration for the 2021 Tri Track season is open, and teams can register at TriTrackModifieds.com/team-info. Teams have the option to either sign-up for the whole season or just one single race.

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Wilbraham & Monson Academy announces hockey program revival

WILBRAHAM – After a 19-year hiatus, ice hockey is returning to Wilbraham & Monson Academy.

Beginning the winter of the 2021-2022 academic year, hockey at the club level will be added to the robust afternoon program at the Academy.

The program will begin with boys and girls playing at the club level, with the plan to build to high-level boys and girls varsity teams in the near future. The team will participate six days a week, like other WMA sports, and will include five days on the ice each week. Other days will consist of dryland training, utilizing WMA's significant fitness facilities.

Spearheaded by Head of School Brian P. Easler, as well as alumni Barry Maloney '85 and four-time Stanley Cup champion Bill Guerin '89, and three-time Olympic medalist Kacey Bellamy, an exploratory committee including current parents, was assembled to consider the idea of reviving the popular program.

"Hockey has been a part of the WMA history, and we look forward to it being part of the school's future, for both girls and boys," Easler said. "We have students who attend WMA and play for outside teams, and we are excited for them to have the opportunity to play for their school and help us build a competitive program we can all be proud of and which can serve the greater Springfield hockey community."

Though a coach has yet to be named, enthusiasm within the network of current and former hockey players in the Academy's student body and alumni communities, along with the opportunity to build a prep school program from the ground up, will no doubt be a draw for coaching candidates and, ultimately, the best coach for the WMA program. Interested applicants may submit their materials to hockey@wma.us; the deadline is Monday, March 15, 2021. To learn more about WMA hockey and the Academy's other programming, visit www.wma.us/hockey or www.wma.us.

Retirement board claims innocence; communities disagree

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

REGION – In response to questions about mismanagement, the Hampden County Regional Retirement Board repeatedly said on March 3 conference call with several local officials that members had been unaware of the violations they were committing.

An unsettling audit released last month by the state Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission revealed that the Hampden County retirement board exceeded its budget and suspiciously spent approximately \$800,000 on inappropriate raises, false invoices, travel fees, fraudulent social security and other misappropriations between 2014 and 2018.

During last Wednesday's meeting, the board attempted to form a committee solely comprised of its own members to investigate its own wrongdoing.

After town administrators and community members protested, the board unanimously voted to instead establish an audit committee consisting of two board members and a member of the Hampden County Regional Retirement Board Advisory Council.

"Isn't the audit committee the fox watching the hen house?" asked Hampden Board of Selectmen Chair Donald Davenport, audibly concerned by the chosen course of action.

During a call that lasted nearly 90 minutes, the board claimed that no malicious or fraudulent actions were taken and pledged to pinpoint what contributed to the egregious pattern of financial malfeasance that spanned nearly five years.

Retirement board Chairman/Treasurer Richard Theroux and Executive Director Julianne Bartley claimed repeatedly that the board unknowingly made and approved expenditures that, at best, violated state statutes and, at worst, were blatantly fraudulent.

Officials on the call were unsatisfied with the board's lengthy but hollow explanations.

False invoices

The first item discussed on March 3 involved approximately \$234,000 that was spent on 119 invoices for services never rendered, reviewed or documented. In response, Theroux said, "This is an issue with our website," and that the scenario represents "the reasons that we do have an audit."

Board member Laurel Placzek expressed her desire to discover the source of the suspicious invoices.

"That is one of the things we need to look to see is if in any of the invoices [PERAC] is referring to, if we did have a contract. And if there was a conflict, then, obviously, an error was made in making these payments, and that error we are attempting to correct as soon as possible," said Placzek.

Bank service charges

Moving on, the board discussed a series of bank service charges that amounted to \$87,229. Bob Markel, Hampden's town ad-

ministrator, questioned why the board would elect to do service with a bank that charges fees.

"Why would the board switch to a bank that applies service charges when you have so much money on deposit? I don't understand that, and the person who sent that in does not understand it," said Markel, reading aloud a question submitted by an official in a neighboring Hampden County community.

Several board members explained that the financial institution which the board has long done business with merged with Bank of America, resulting in the switch to a bank that charges services fees.

Attorneys on the payroll

In violation of state statutes, the board two made two attorneys members of its system, paying them a total of \$179,266 in legal fees and \$448,210 in premiums over the course of the audit. Most communities use employee money to pay 50% of premiums, but municipal employees were forced to pay 90% of the fees of attorneys associated with the retirement board during the audit.

Markel asked if either attorney mentioned that it's illegal for such action to be taken, to which Theroux noted that the board was simply attempting to save money and avoid conflicts of interest by hiring two individuals on a part-time basis.

Bartley added that, for 30 years, it had been part of the board's standard operating procedure to have its attorneys enter the system. She was surprised to learn that such action was illegal.

"I, in particular, was not aware of the provisions of Chapter 34.B when it was enacted in 1998. I, at that time, was not the director of the system," said Bartley. "This audit has, obviously, brought to our attention that we were in violation of that provision of that law. As recommended by the board, we have stopped treating the attorneys as employees."

Since the release of the audit, both attorneys in question are no longer affiliated with the board. Bartley said that the board will soon create a new request for proposal for legal services.

"[The attorneys] were not aware of this provision of the law, nor was I," said Bartley.

Travel expenses

The fourth discussion point during the March 3 phone call touched upon unexplained travel expenses. For instance, Theroux allotted a total of \$1,825 for travel expenses for four business-related trips to Cape Cod.

The only problem was that Theroux spent each trip in his own condo and had a neighboring resident sign documents claiming to verify that he stayed in nearby residences on each occasion.

When confronted about having committed possible fraud, Theroux declined to comment but did note that he repaid the money following the audit's release.

"I would like to comment further to clear up this issue, but, unfortunately, at this point I cannot," said Theroux, adding that

the invoices were less than "any other lodging that was possibly available."

Separately, several board members requested a total of \$7,983 from an investment firm to cover travel expenses to a conference. The firm wasn't reimbursed until it was made clear that a violation occurred.

"Yes it was a violation, but it was not done maliciously; it was an oversight. We have now made the payment," said Bartley.

Markel questioned how the veteran board members were unaware of state law.

"Is it not common knowledge amongst municipal employees and officials, reinforced every year by a requirement from the Ethics Commission, that no one can accept a gratuity of any kind above \$50? Was the board not aware of that and did the attorneys not advise the board that accepting was a direct violation of state statute?" Markel asked.

Social Security

The audit went on to report that multiple board members earned thousands of dollars in Social Security despite a state statute that prohibits public employees from collecting social security.

"Every employee in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts knows that we are not a Social Security state," said Markel. "It is more than astonishing that veteran municipal officials would not understand that. Secondly, if there was a question, consult the attorney, and then be told it is not legal to take out Social Security; you are a public employee in Massachusetts."

Bartley again claimed that the action was the result of an oversight. She noted that the three members who received Social Security had been acting, contributing members of the system and subsequently retired.

"I wasn't aware that they could be treated as retired annuitants of the system and, therefore we would not have to set up a separate retirement account for them," said Bartley. "Since I have been informed that this was incorrect, I have subsequently sent a letter to Social Security to ask that the employer share of the \$4,800 be returned to the board because it was taken out in error."

Salary increases and unexplained overtime

The audit reported a number of "unapproved" salary increases for Theroux that exceeded the permitted annual stipend of \$4,500. Despite having a vote and being chairman and treasurer for the board, Theroux adamantly expressed his belief that this was permissible because he is "not a board member," although he later rescinded the belief near the end of the meeting without explaining the stipend.

Additionally, the audit also identified that documents containing overtime information only listed staff names and salaries without indicating hourly wages or how many hours were worked.

Again, the board chalked its mistake up to an oversight, one

that resulted from system-wide elections. Overtime was needed to ensure that the elections met mandated deadlines.

"The cost for running that election is well over \$10,000, and it is not anything that the board nor I can anticipate due to the fact that an individual can choose to run and pick up nomination papers that are not due to the system until October, which is well after the budget is complete for that fiscal year," said Bartley.

Moving forward, Bartley promised that the board will make hourly wages and amounts of overtime incurred more visible on the front of its yearly warrant.

Monthly financials

The PERAC audit also noted that the board exceeded its FY2017 budget by 6.5% or \$60,507. The board again blamed the occurrence on system-wide elections and their financial demand.

Bartley also explained that the board exceeded the 2017 budget partially due to the "retirement of a longtime staff member, who by contract, needed to be paid a buy-out, one time only of benefits she accrued and were payable to her upon notice of her retirement."

Aftermath

Following the discussion on March 3, officials on the conference call voiced their collective displeasure. Even if the board acted non-maliciously, Davenport questioned if the members could ever be trusted again.

"Given how many times we've heard today that the chairman and director were unaware and didn't know the law or wasn't sure or had no idea about certain things, do you have confidence that they can go forward and run this administration?" said Davenport, to which all five board members expressed that they should maintain their positions.

Theroux responded, categorizing the audit as being "disturbing."

He promised to take action to ensure similar events do not unfold. However, he largely deflected blame, noting that the board's value had risen to \$456,000,402 in December of 2020 with an average return rate of 8.8%.

"I am more than proud of doubling this board's assets over the past 10 years," said Theroux. "I want to assure all of the active and retired members of the Hampden County Regional Retirement Board that [we are] an asset of this system for their retirement because why we're here."

The board noted that it has six months to offer further explanations for the misappropriation of funds, as PERAC will follow up in August or September. Another conference call could occur as soon as next month.

"We have been working on this daily to get the answers out given the gravity of this audit. We will continue to do that," said Theroux.

Whether or not Theroux and his colleagues will hold onto their positions remains to be seen.

PUBLIC NOTICES

MORTGAGEE’S
SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by RIMOR Properties, LLC to Greenfield Cooperative Bank dated December 12, 2016 and recorded with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 21485, Page 381, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at **11:00 a.m. on the 14th day of April, 2021**, on the mortgaged premises believed to be known as 34 Beverly Street, Chicopee, Hampden County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit:

“The land in Chicopee, Hampden County, Massachusetts situated on 34 Beverly Street with the building thereon and being known and designated as Lot #57 (fifty-seven) on plan of Chandler Slope recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds, Book of Plans R, Page 86.

Said Lot #57 (fifty-seven) is more particularly bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a point in the Northerly line of Beverly Street at the Southwesterly corner of Lot #56 (fifty-six) on said plan, and running thence

NORTHEASTERLY along said Lot #56 (fifty-six), one hundred (100”) feet to Lot #48 (forty-eight) on said plan; thence

NORTHWESTERLY along said Lot #48 (forty-eight), fifty (50’) feet to Lot #58 (fifty-eight) on said plan; thence

SOUTHWESTERLY along said Lot #58 (fifty-eight), one hundred (100’) feet to Beverly Street; and thence

SOUTHEASTERLY along said Beverly Street, fifty (50’) feet to the place of beginning.

Being the same premises conveyed to the Mortgagor herein by deed of Diane E. Adamson, Personal Representative of the Estate of Eva D. Daviau recorded simultaneously herewith.”

The premises will be sold subject to any and all restrictions, easements, improvements, covenants, outstanding tax titles, municipal or other public taxes, assessments, liens or claims in the nature of liens, and existing encumbrances of record superior to the mortgage, if any. Said premises will also be sold subject to all leases and tenancies having priority over said mortgage, to tenancies or occupation by persons on the premises now and at the time of said auction which tenancies or occupation are subject to said mortgage, to rights or claims in personal property installed by tenants or former tenants now located on the premises, also to all laws and ordinances including, but not limited to, all building and zoning laws and ordinances. It shall be the bidder’s sole responsibility to ascertain all items described in this paragraph and no representations are made concerning compliance with applicable zoning, building, sanitary or other state and/or municipal regulations.

TERMS OF SALE:

TEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 (\$10,000.00) DOLLARS will be required to be paid in cash, or by certified or bank cashier’s check by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance of the purchase price in connection with the sale shall be paid in cash, or by certified or bank cashier’s check within thirty (30) days of the date of the sale and the Deed transferred contemporaneously therewith at which time the purchaser shall also pay directly to the auctioneer a buyer’s premium equal to five percent (5%) of the purchase price. The purchaser at the sale shall be required to sign a Memorandum of terms of sale containing the above terms at the Auction sale. The purchaser will be responsible for all closing costs, Massachusetts deed excise stamps and all recording fees.

The sale may be postponed or adjourned from time to time, if necessary, by the attorney for the mortgagee at the scheduled time and place of sale. The description for the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, will be announced at the sale.

Greenfield Cooperative Bank,
Present Holder of said Mortgage

By: /s/Jonathan C. Sapirstein
Jonathan C. Sapirstein
SAPIRSTEIN &
SAPIRSTEIN, P.C.
1331 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 827-7500
Date: February 25, 2021
Its Attorneys
03/12, 03/19, 03/26/2021

MORTGAGEE’S
SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by RIMOR Properties, LLC to Greenfield Cooperative Bank dated January 5, 2018 and recorded with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 22016, Page 278, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at **10:00 a.m. on the 14th day of April, 2021**, on the mortgaged premises believed to be known as 389-391 Front Street, Chicopee, Hampden County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit:

“The land in Chicopee, with the buildings thereon, bounded and described as follows: Situated on the northerly side of Front Street. Beginning at the southeasterly corner of the land herein conveyed on said street and thence running

NORTHERLY on land formerly of William Ritter one hundred sixty and 82/100 (160.82) feet to land now or formerly of Sarah A. Woodworth; thence

WESTERLY on last named land on a line parallel to said Front Street seventy-nine (79) feet to land now or formerly of said Woodworth; thence

SOUTHERLY on last named land on a line par-

allel to the first mentioned line one hundred sixty and 82/100 (160.82) feet to said Front Street; and thence

EASTERLY

on said street seventy-nine (79) feet to the point of beginning.

Hereby also conveying all of our right, title and interest, if any, in and to the parcel of land situated on the Easterly side of Chase Place and the Westerly side of the above described parcel and shown on a plan of Lots owned by Eleanor W. Hale, dated January 1910, filed at the Hampden County Registry of Deeds at Book of Plans 2, Page 205.

BEING the same premises conveyed to the MORTGAGOR by deed of CJK Realty, LLC dated January 5, 2018 and recorded simultaneously herewith.”

The premises will be sold subject to any and all restrictions, easements, improvements, covenants, outstanding tax titles, municipal or other public taxes, assessments, liens or claims in the nature of liens, and existing encumbrances of record superior to the mortgage, if any. Said premises will also be sold subject to all leases and tenancies having priority over said mortgage, to tenancies or occupation by persons on the premises now and at the time of said auction which tenancies or occupation are subject to said mortgage, to rights or claims in personal property installed by tenants or former tenants now located on the premises, also to all laws and ordinances including, but not limited to, all building and zoning laws and ordinances. It shall be the bidder’s sole responsibility to ascertain all items described in this paragraph and no representations are made concerning compliance with applicable zoning, building, sanitary or other state and/or municipal regulations.

TERMS OF SALE: TEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 (\$10,000.00) DOLLARS will be required to be paid in cash, or by certified or bank cashier’s check by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance of the purchase price in connection with the sale shall be paid in cash, or by certified or bank cashier’s check within thirty (30) days of the date of the sale and the Deed transferred contemporaneously therewith at which time the purchaser shall also pay directly to the auctioneer a buyer’s premium equal to five percent (5%) of the purchase price. The purchaser at the sale shall be required to sign a Memorandum of terms of sale containing the above terms at the Auction sale. The purchaser will be responsible for all closing costs, Massachusetts deed excise stamps and all recording fees.

The sale may be postponed or adjourned from time to time, if necessary, by the attorney for the mortgagee at the scheduled time and place of sale. The description for the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, will be announced at the sale.

Greenfield Cooperative Bank,
Present Holder of said Mortgage

By: /s/Jonathan C. Sapirstein
Jonathan C. Sapirstein
SAPIRSTEIN &
SAPIRSTEIN, P.C.
1331 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 827-7500
Date: February 25, 2021
Its Attorneys
03/12, 03/19, 03/26/2021

CHICOPEE CITY
COUNCIL ZONING
COMMITTEE
LEGAL NOTICE

The Zoning Committee of the Chicopee City Council will hold a public hearing **Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 6:30 PM*** in the Council Chambers, 4th floor, City Hall Annex, 274 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013 to discuss the following:

Special Permit application under 275-52 (B) (11) for the purpose of a home occupation permit to legally produce baked goods such as cakes and cookies in a residential kitchen located at 64 McCarthy Avenue. Applicant – Jessica Carrano, 64 McCarthy Avenue, Chicopee, MA 01020.

The plans/application can be viewed on the City Council website <https://www.chicopeema.gov/880/Pending-Applications>

***COVID-19:** Pursuant to the Governor’s Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, MGL c. 30A due to the novel Coronavirus outbreak, the March 31, 2021 Zoning Committee hearing shall be available to the public via zoom and in person. As required, alternative public access to this hearing shall be provided in the following manner: The hearing will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Anyone wishing to participate either in person in the Chambers or remotely shall, provide notice to the Office of the City Council by calling (413) 594-1435 M-F 8:30 AM – 5 PM or by email at aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov by March 29, 2021. Those giving such notice will need to identify the public hearing and provide their name, address and contact phone number to minimize the potential for zoom bombing of the meeting and if attending in person to be screened as required by the City of Chicopee.

The petition and materials related to this proposal are on file in the Office of the City Council, Chicopee City Hall, 274 Front Street, (plans and applications are also available on the City Council website <https://www.chicopeema.gov/880/Pending-Applications>.) You may also call (413) 594-1435 or email aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov. 03/12, 03/19/2021

CHICOPEE CITY
COUNCIL ZONING
COMMITTEE
LEGAL NOTICE

The Zoning Committee of the Chicopee City Council will hold a public hearing **Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 6:30 PM*** in the Council Chambers, 4th floor, City Hall Annex, 274 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013 to discuss the following:

Special Permit application under 275-50 (A) (1)

(g) (1) for the purpose of an off-premise, non-accessory sign (also defined as a billboard) for the Leadfoot Brewing located at 30 Buckley Blvd. and any needed waivers under 275-50 (A) (1). Request the following waivers:

1. A waiver from 275-50.A (1) (g) (1) (a) – To waive the requirement for a billboard to not be located within 1,500 feet of a park or the main building entrance of a school or church.

2. A waiver from 275-50.A (1)(g) (1) (b) – To waive the requirement for a billboard to not be located within 500 feet of residentially zoned land.

3. A waiver from 275-62 (D) – To waive the requirement that a freestanding sign may be allowed for each building set back as least 25 feet.

Applicant – Leadfoot Brewing LLC, Patrick Randall, 4 John Lane, South Hadley, MA 01075.

The plans/application can be viewed on the City Council website <https://www.chicopeema.gov/880/Pending-Applications>

***COVID-19:** Pursuant to the Governor’s Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, MGL c. 30A due to the novel Coronavirus outbreak, the March 31, 2021 Zoning Committee hearing shall be available to the public via zoom and in person. As required, alternative public access to this hearing shall be provided in the following manner: The hearing will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Anyone wishing to participate either in person in the Chambers or remotely shall, provide notice to the Office of the City Council by calling (413) 594-1435 M-F 8:30 AM – 5 PM or by email at aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov by March 29, 2021. Those giving such notice will need to identify the public hearing and provide their name, address and contact phone number to minimize the potential for zoom bombing of the meeting and if attending in person to be screened as required by the City of Chicopee.

The petition and materials related to this proposal are on file in the Office of the City Council, Chicopee City Hall, 274 Front Street, (plans and applications are also available on the City Council website <https://www.chicopeema.gov/880/Pending-Applications>.) You may also call (413) 594-1435 or email aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov. 03/12, 03/19/2021

NOTICE OF
MORTGAGEE’S
SALE OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 54 Alfred Street, Chicopee, Massachusetts

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by George A. Taylor and Genevieve A. Taylor to Financial Freedom Senior Funding Corporation, a subsidiary of Indy Mac Bank, F.S.B. and now held by Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. as Trustee for Mortgage Assets Management Series I Trust, said mortgage dated June 22, 2006, and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds, in Book 16007 at Page 423, as affected by an Assignment of Mortgage dated September 29, 2009,

and recorded with said Deeds in Book 18015 at Page 528, as affected by an Assignment of Mortgage dated December 22, 2017, and recorded with said Deeds in Book 22036 at Page 278, as affected by an Assignment of Mortgage dated August 28, 2018, and recorded with said Deeds in Book 22356 at Page 597, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction on **April 2, 2021, at 11:00 AM** Local Time upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

The land with the buildings thereon in Chicopee, Hampden County, Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Said premises are shown as Lot 18 on a plan of land drawn of Section 4, Mountainview Acres recorded with Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book of Plans 57, Pages 65 and 66.

Subject to and with the benefit of all easements, restrictions, rights, conditions, reservations, rights-of-way, covenants, provisions, orders, takings and agreements of record, and as set forth in deeds, in so far as the same are in force and applicable.

For Grantor’s title see Deed recorded at book 3243, Page 324.

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

For Mortgagor’s Title see deed dated February 23, 1967, and recorded in Book 3243 at Page 324 with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds.

TERMS OF SALE: Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

TEN THOUSAND (\$10,000.00) Dollars of the purchase price must be paid by a certified check, bank treasurer’s or cashier’s check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid by a certified check, bank treasurer’s or cashier’s check within forty five (45) days after the date of sale.

Other terms to be announced at the sale.

Marinosci Law Group, P.C.
275 West Natick Road,
Suite 500

Warwick, RI 02886
Attorney for Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. as Trustee for Mortgage Assets Management Series I Trust

Present Holder of the Mortgage

Telephone: (401) 234-9200
MLG File No.: 18-02970
03/12, 03/19, 03/26/2021

ALDEN CREDIT UNION
ANNUAL MEETING

Alden Credit Union will hold its annual meeting on **Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 5 p.m.** via phone conference. For further details please contact, Jennifer Faustino at 413-536-0475 ext. 107
03/05, 03/12/2021

PUBLIC NOTICES

CHICOPEE CITY COUNCIL ZONING COMMITTEE LEGAL NOTICE

The Zoning Committee of the Chicopee City Council will hold a public hearing **Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 6:30 PM*** in the Council Chambers, 4th floor, City Hall Annex, 274 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013 to discuss the following:

Special Permit application under 275-40 (G) for the purpose of reduction in required number of parking spaces from 18 to 16 spaces located at 675 Fuller Road. Applicant - Mike Laser Enterprises, LLC, c/o David LaVenture, 428 East Street, Chicopee, MA 01020.

The plans/application can be viewed on the City Council website <https://www.chicopeema.gov/880/Pending-Applications>

***COVID-19:** Pursuant to the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, MGL c. 30A due to the novel Coronavirus outbreak, the March 31, 2021 Zoning Committee hearing shall be available to the public via zoom and in person. As required, alternative public access to this hearing shall be provided in the following manner: The hearing will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Anyone wishing to participate either in person in the Chambers or remotely shall, provide notice to the Office of the City Council by calling (413) 594-1435 M-F 8:30 AM - 5 PM or by email at aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov by March 29, 2021. Those giving such notice will need to identify the public hearing and provide their name, address and contact

phone number to minimize the potential for zoom bombing of the meeting and if attending in person to be screened as required by the City of Chicopee.

The petition and materials related to this proposal are on file in the Office of the City Council, Chicopee City Hall, 274 Front Street, (plans and applications are also available on the City Council website <https://www.chicopeema.gov/880/Pending-Applications>. You may also call (413) 594-1435 or email aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov. 03/12, 03/19/2021

CHICOPEE CITY COUNCIL ZONING COMMITTEE LEGAL NOTICE

The Zoning Committee of the Chicopee City Council will hold a public hearing **Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 6:30 PM*** in the Council Chambers, 4th floor, City Hall Annex, 274 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013 to discuss the following:

Special Permit application under 275-72 for the purpose of the establishment of an Adult Use of Marijuana - Marijuana retailer - License Group B located at 1269 Memorial Drive. Applicant - JimBuddy's Rec Shop, Inc., James Robinson, 30 Vадnais Street, Chicopee, MA 01020.

The plans/application can be viewed on the City Council website <https://www.chicopeema.gov/880/Pending-Applications>

***COVID-19:** Pursuant to the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, MGL c. 30A due to the novel Coronavirus outbreak,

the March 31, 2021 Zoning Committee hearing shall be available to the public via zoom and in person. As required, alternative public access to this hearing shall be provided in the following manner: The hearing will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Anyone wishing to participate either in person in the Chambers or remotely shall, provide notice to the Office of the City Council by calling (413) 594-1435 M-F 8:30 AM - 5 PM or by email at aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov by March 29, 2021. Those giving such notice will need to identify the public hearing and provide their name, address and contact phone number to minimize the potential for zoom bombing of the meeting and if attending in person to be screened as required by the City of Chicopee.

The petition and materials related to this proposal are on file in the Office of the City Council, Chicopee City Hall, 274 Front Street, (plans and applications are also available on the City Council website <https://www.chicopeema.gov/880/Pending-Applications>.) You may also call (413) 594-1435 or email aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov. 03/12, 03/19/2021

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD21P0393EA
Estate of: Pauline R Godin
Date of Death: 01/10/2021
CITATION ON**

PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Michelle M Normandin** of Torrington, CT and **David P Godin** of Suffield, CT requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Michelle M Normandin** of Torrington, CT and **David P Godin** of Suffield, CT be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in an **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/01/2021**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administra-

tion is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: March 04, 2021
Rosemary A Saccomani
Register of Probate
03/12/2021

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD21P0354EA
Estate of:**

Ann Elizabeth Velthouse
Also known as:
Ann E Velthouse
Date of Death: 01/15/2021
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **David A Velthouse** of Ludlow, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **David A Velthouse** of Ludlow, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in an

unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/01/2021**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an Affidavit of Objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: March 04, 2021
Rosemary A Saccomani
Register of Probate
03/12/2021

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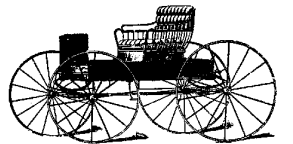
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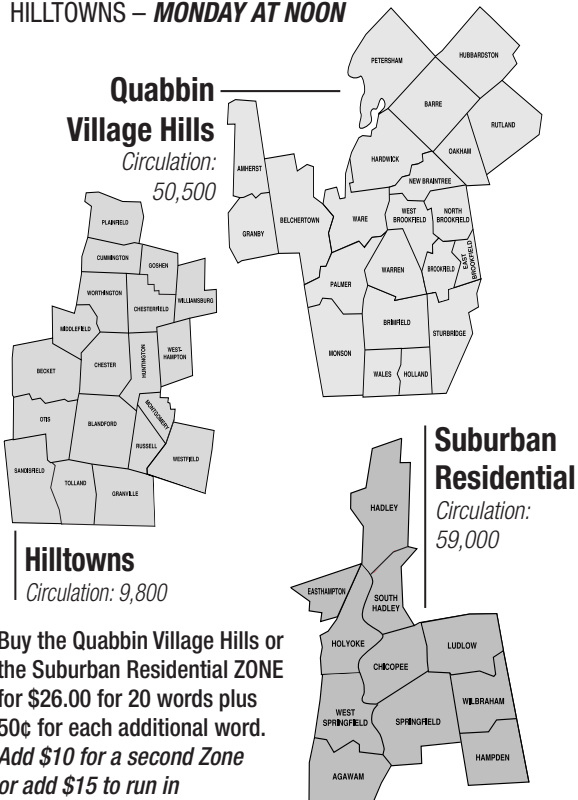
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Resilience, happiness focus of April 10 HCC class

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College is partnering with Pam Victor, president and founder of Happier Valley Comedy, to offer “Establishing Resilience: Building Happiness,” a 2-½ hour Zoom workshop on Sat., April 10, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Victor, a comedian and im-

prov facilitator who prefers the title “head of happiness,” will lead participants on an experiential exploration of happiness and resilience building to enhance their joy and ease at work and home. She will share stress-relieving exercises and techniques to help people bring more well-being,

laughter, gratitude, and play into their daily lives.

“Finding more joy in 2021 is a priority for me,” said Michele Cabral, HCC executive director of Business, Corporate and Professional Development. “As a participant in Pam’s 30-day ‘Happiness Experiment,’ I

can tell you without doubt that this class is for everyone. In this single session, participants will get an introduction into the full program while Pam shares many useful tips and resources to help people get an uplifting start to the new year.”

According to its website,

happiervalley.com, Happier Valley Comedy, based in Hadley, is Western Mass’s first and only comedy theater and training program:

The cost of the April 10 class is \$99.

To register, go to: hcc.edu/happiness

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TOWN OF WILBRAHAM, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/DATA COLLECTOR Looking for a reliable Administrative Assistant/Data Collector. For application and more information please visit www.wilbraham-ma.gov. Application Deadline 3/26/2021 at 4:30PM. EOE

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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development “HUD” toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



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Baker-Polito Administration files \$400M bond bill to rebuild Soldiers' Home

BOSTON – On Feb. 11, the Baker-Polito Administration filed “An Act Financing the Reconstruction of the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke,” which would provide \$400 million in capital authorization for a major project to reconstruct the long-term care facility at the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home.

This bill provides the capital authorization that would allow the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) to construct a new long-term care facility on the site of the current Holyoke Soldiers’ Home that would meet the needs of the veterans of Western Massachusetts and their families.

The capital project is on an expedited timeline, necessitated by the April 15 deadline for the VA State Home Construction Grant Program, which would provide 65% matching federal funds. To meet that deadline, DCAMM must have this authorization available by April 1, 2021, which requires this bond bill to be enacted by mid-March, with a terms bill filed and enacted soon afterwards. The design development phase must be completed by Aug. 1, 2021 to be eligible for this cycle of the grant program.

“Building a new, state-of-the-art long-term care facility at the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke will ensure we can continue providing quality care for current veterans residing at the Home, as well as

future residents,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “I look forward to working with our partners in the Legislature to pass this bill so that we can transform the future of the Home, meet the next major deadline in the capital project, and continue to secure funding from our federal partners at the Veterans’ Administration.”

“The Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke is a unique and special place in the community, and the Baker-Polito Administration is working diligently in partnership with our colleagues in the Legislature to ensure its future ability to serve the next generation of veterans,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “This expedited capital project for the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke provides an exciting opportunity to provide a state-of-the-art long-term care facility to meet the needs of our veterans in the coming years and to ensure that they are aligned with anticipated demand.”

“The current Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke was constructed before modern design standards for medical facilities, and the Administration has taken immediate steps to address urgent capital and infection control needs, but it is clear that a major reconstruction of the campus is necessary for the safety, health and comfort of future generations of veterans and staff,” said Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders. “We are

pleased that the planning process involved significant opportunity for community and stakeholder input into the plan’s development to date.”

“The Baker-Polito Administration continues to work collaboratively with stakeholders throughout the Commonwealth to make meaningful investments that help ensure the health, safety, and quality of life for Massachusetts veterans,” said Administration and Finance Secretary Michael J. Heffernan. “This bond bill will provide critical authorization to reconstruct the long-term care facility at the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home and we look forward to working closely with our colleagues in the Legislature to quickly pass this bill.”

“The filing of this bond bill to secure funding is one more step in the construction of a new state-of-the-art Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke and a sign of hope and progress as we move forward to care for our aging veterans with dignity, honor and respect in Western Massachusetts,” said Veterans’ Services Secretary Cheryl Lussier Poppe. “We look forward to continuing our expeditious efforts with DCAMM, Payette, EOHHS, the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke, and community partners including the Board of Trustees, to complete this process.”

“We are continuing to work closely with our local, state, and

federal partners and a wide range of community stakeholders as we move forward with the project to reconstruct the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke,” said Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance Commissioner Carol Gladstone. “Having this bond authorization available by April 1 is a critical step in the process to submit a grant application to receive federal funding, and we appreciate the prompt consideration of this legislation.”

“I have been pleased by the rapid planning process and the Baker-Polito Administration’s commitment to hearing and responding to the views and concerns of the veteran residents, families and staff on a wide range of priorities including bed capacity,” said Massachusetts National Guard Major General Gary W. Keefe, chairperson of the Board of Trustees for the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke. “This is a great example of how we can achieve positive outcomes for our Western Massachusetts veterans, and we look forward to serving them in this beautiful new facility.”

Beginning with the Rapid Planning Process in September of 2020, the Commonwealth has engaged a wide range of stakeholders to assess current needs and to gather input on the planning process. The Commonwealth remains committed to a transparent process and to providing stakeholders and

the community with progress reports as they become available.

The Rapid Planning Phase was launched in August to identify a sustainable, public health, implementation roadmap to provide significant upgrades to the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke. The architecture firm that led this project, Payette, wrote a report detailing its findings and recommended next steps. This report represents the culmination of research gathered by a broad group of veterans, families, veterans’ organizations, the community, and other stakeholders through focus groups, interviews, and surveys. These recommendations reflect the learnings from those engagements, and the analysis of demographic data and services in Western Massachusetts. Read the full report here.

While the expedited capital project will address long-term facility viability, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), the Department of Veterans’ Services (DVS) and the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) have been addressing immediate capital needs, including a \$6 million refresh of units, to significantly improve infection control for the residents and staff. The refresh includes refinishing the living and working environment to support infection control, including the installation of air purification units.


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